

January 29, 2007

Online Training Update

Thanks to the efforts of the Organizational Development team at the Department of Labor, ethics training for public officials and state employees should be available in a new way soon. By early March, we hope to have available to all state agencies an interactive, online training – just as comprehensive as our in-person speaking engagements. State employees will be able to take the training at their convenience from any computer, and agency liaisons will be able to track who has passed the training (yes, there will be quiz questions!). We are very excited about this offering, and will keep pressing to get it to you soon.

New Advisory Opinions

On January 25, 2007, the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board met and decided on three new advisory opinions, summarized below. Click on the AO number to read the full text of the opinion.

2007-1, Reconsideration of Advisory Opinion 1997-20, Regarding § 1-84 (o)

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board concluded that: (a) the reporting requirement in § 1-84 (o) applies to any person regulated by, doing business with, or seeking to do business with a department or agency and not only to registered client lobbyists; and (b) that § 1-97 (d) applies to both registered client and communicator lobbyists. The Board also concluded that, for the purposes of § 1-84 (o), the determination of who is an executive head of an agency varies. Those agencies with questions as to their agency head should contact the Office of State Ethics. This opinion supersedes 1997-20.

2007-2, Application of Section 1-84 (m) to the Judicial Branch

It is the opinion of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board that, for purposes of § 1-84 (m), attorneys admitted to practice law in the state of Connecticut are "directly regulated" by the Superior Court. Additionally, the Judicial Department and its components constitute a single state department or agency. Thus, employees of the Judicial Department are prohibited from accepting any "gift," as defined in § 1-79 (e), from attorneys admitted to practice law in Connecticut.

2007-3, Public Notice for Legislative Receptions

Registered lobbyists and business organizations are permitted to host one legislative reception per year, either a state-wide or regional event. It is the opinion of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board that the requirement that such legislative receptions be "publicly noticed" is satisfied by publishing the event in the Connecticut General Assembly's Bulletin. When the General Assembly is not in session, the notice requirement is satisfied by publication in the interim Bulletin if the event is taking place at the state capitol or in the Legislative Office Building. Should these options not be available, notice should be published in a newspaper, circulating either statewide or regionally, depending on the nature of the event.

OSE Update

As you may have read on our Web site's home page, the OSE now has on board a General Counsel and Ethics Enforcement Officer. We are fully staffed and looking

forward to working on substantive matters of policy in 2007 and beyond. As always, you are a part of our efforts, and we encourage your continued communication with our office.

Sincerely,

Meredith Trimble
Director of Education
Office of State Ethics